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ABSTRACT

Historical sources show that advertising practitioners actively sought to improve the respectability of their profession between 1885 and 1917. Advertising professionals during that time wanted to rid their occupation of its poor public image and to create public acceptance by eliminating nonprofessional conduct and by patterning the advertising business after more traditional professions, such as law and medicine. This attitude of professionalism became a self-serving ideal that advertising practitioners believed would make their business more profitable and respectable. The Associated Advertising Clubs of America played a crucial role in establishing advertising degree programs at major universities throughout the United States. By 1917, however, university instruction had not produced the desired professional autonomy, and the social status of those in business had improved considerably. Consequently, the advertising business abandoned its quest for professional advertising education. Since that time, advertising instruction has developed largely as a combination of applied social science, common-sense craftsmanship, and professional aspiration. (Author/RL)

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The Quest for Professional Advertising Education Before 1917

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THE QUEST FOR PROFESSIONAL ADVERTISING EDUCATION BEFORE 1917

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ABSTRACT

During the years between 1885 and 1917, advertising practitioners actively sought to make their craft a respected profession. They hoped to rid their occupation of its poor public image and to create public acceptance by eliminating non-professional conduct and fashioning the advertising business after traditional professions, especially law and medicine. Professionalism became a self-serving ideal that advertising practitioners believed would make their business more profitable and respectable. Believing that university-level advertising instruction was essential for professionalization, members of the largest and most powerful trade organization, the Associated Advertising Clubs of America, played a crucial role in establishing advertising degree programs at major universities throughout the country. However, university instruction by 1917 had not provided the business with the professional autonomy it hoped to achieve. Moreover, by World War I the social status of the businessman in America had improved considerably. Consequently the business largely abandoned its quest for professional advertising education, which left such university programs without an intellectual, scientific or professional home. Yet today advertising instruction is largely a combination of applied social science, common-sense craftmanship and professional aspiration.

Presented to the History Division at the Association for Education in Journalism Annual Convention in Boston, Mass., August 1980.

THE QUEST FOR PROFESSIONAL ADVERTISING EDUCATION BEFORE 1917

Modern professions such as law and medicine are characterized by national organizations, formal ethical codes, certification and licensing, educational standards and a body of specialized knowledge. Each characteristic contributes to the autonomy of a profession in society by relegating administrative, financial and epistemological power to the profession itself. The strongest professions are those most able to control the nature of and market for professional practice by insulating members from outside claims to authority. Professionalism tends to legitimize occupational values and practices by validating definitions of appropriate professional and client conduct. In Western, secular societies, professionalism has ushered in a new priestly class of various occupational groups and specialists who dispense priveleged knowledge to society.

Although its efforts have largely gone unchronicled, the advertising business in the three decades prior to 1917 attempted to make its craft a profession. Advertising practitioners zealously pursued the typical professional ideals, especially ethical standards, national organization, licensing, specialized knowledge and educational requirements. They hoped during the Progressive Era to seize hold of the rising status of the businessman and the scientist by bringing advertiser, agency and university professor into a harmonious bond of mutual professional interest. This paper describes and analyzes the attempt by advertising practitioners to develop a base of privileged knowledge in the context of formal educational institutions, especially the university.

The advertising business never had a formal apprenticeship system, but prior to 1900 most instruction took place between experienced and novice practitioners in major Midwestern and Eastern cities. Retail department stores hired well-known copywriters to train chosen employees in the techniques of writing and illustrating advertisements for local newspapers. John Powers, who gained a reputation as the copywriter for John Wannamaker's successful Philadelphia department store, initiated perhaps the first mobile training program. Printers' Ink reported he "spends a month in a store, sets up his system of advertising, instructs his successor, puts the store in the way of success, and goes to the next."[1]

In New York, Charles Austin Bates, another legendary advertising figure, published copywriting contests in the trade press to locate men of writing abilities for training and employment in his agency. One of his students, Illinois native Earnest Elmo Calkins, recalled Bates' novel approach to advertising instruction:

> "The shop was the first to supply advertisers with copy... a shop where the manufacturer could buy anything from a small leaflet to a series of newspaper advertisements was a novelty, and we met the success that suppliers of long-felt wants are apt to meet... In a short time I had a chance to try my hand at nearly every form of advertising. And there was the comforting assurance that I dealt with no one but my employer. He had built up a small staff of writers, whose work he directed, interpreting to his writers the needs of the advertisers, and selling to the advertiser the work of the writers. It was thus I learned a simple formula through which I was able to function successfully in a business of my own when the time came, and come it did, to strike out on an independent enterprise." [2]

The first books on the principles of advertising also appeared during the last decade of the 19th century. Bates explained his views on writing and designing advertisements in two books, Good Advertising (1896) and The Art and Literature of Business (1902). The latter was a six-volume, 2,221-page dissertation on virtually every aspect of writing and producing print advertisements. Probably the first book devoted to advertising practice was Nathaniel C. Fowler Jr.'s About Advertising and Printing (1889). It is worth noting that Fowler's text was as much a manual for newspaper publishers as it was a technique book for copywriters. His later book, Fowler's Publicity (1897), which he called an "encyclopedia of advertising and printing," along with the other early books shows the historically close relationship between newspaper publishing and advertising copywriting.[3] As advertising became the foremost subsidy for newspaper production, commercial writing developed into a specialized occupation. Many of the most successful owners of advertising agencies began not as copywriters but as reporters for newspapers; Calkins reported for the Galesburg paper before writing for Bates and eventually founded a successful New York agency; Sherwood Anderson and George Ade vacillated between agency copywriting and newspaper reporting.[4]

No analysis of advertising instruction prior to 1900 would be complete without a discussion of the trade press, especially the first national journal, Printers' Ink. Founded by George P. Rowell in 1888 as a house organ to stimulate business among his agency clients, Printers' Ink grew to over 16,000 in general circulation by the first few years of the 20th century.[5] It and other journals

developed dialogue among practitioners, stimulating the exchange of ideas and information about the nature of successful advertising design and production, as well as about professional aspirations. Rowell appropriately called Printers' Ink the "little schoolmaster in the art of advertising," and published numerous columns on the "technique of the craft." He believed that advertising was indeed a craft that could be learned only through the careful cultivation of innate abilities.

Advertising instruction in the last decade of the 19th century was a combination of self-teaching and inchoate methods of formal instruction, including agency apprenticeships, on-premise retail advertising training and trade journal and textbook instruction. The business lacked any pedagogical principles or indeed any consensus as to what constituted practical or theoretical knowledge. Printers' Ink and other emerging trade journals privided the medium by which practitioners first began discussing their desire for formalized advertising education, a dialogue which was accelerated by the simultaneous appearance of a controversial mode of instruction --correspondence schools.

The introduction of correspondence instruction in advertising cannot be explained apart from two parallel developments: the rising status of the businessman in American culture and the increasing demand for copywriters in major urban areas. These "ad schools," as older practitioners called them,linked the social aspirations of young businessmen with the economic interests of advertisers. In the 1890s the rise of the general interest magazine and the heightened competition for circulation among daily newspapers

accelerated advertising expenditures and created a demand for agency and retail copywriters. It is difficult to determine precisely the extent of the demand, but discussion in the trade press clearly shows that thousands of young people from both urban and rural areas began looking to advertising for employment. These aspiring businessmen viewed especially copywriting as a means of achieving overnight social status and financial success. Advertisements for correspondence schools told them that copywriting was the road to rapid business achievement and immediate social distinction. In fact, copywriting did pay substantially more than other business-related entry-level positions, such as bookkeeping and accounting; a young man or woman with writing ability received impressive and frequent salary raises, but the rate of success was small and the turnover enormous. Advertiser and agency management quickly fired non-productive copywriters since there was an abundance of novice writers waiting for a chance to display their literary prowess.[6]

The Page-Davis Correspondence School of Advertising offered the first successful courses in copywriting. Samuel A. Davis, head of the advertising department of a large wholesale mercantile house in Chicago, and Edward T. Page, copywriter for a Chicago retailer, began the course in 1897. They tested the potential demand for instruction by running the following advertisement in a Chicago paper: "Wanted--A few students to take special instruction in the art of advertising classes to be personally conducted by experts now holding responsible positions in their profession." According to Printers' Ink, responses to the

announcement ran "a foot high," and the two instructors selected ten students for the first class, charging each one a hundred dollars for a series of lectures. Realizing potential for profit, they quit their jobs, wrote a series of lessons based on the lectures and spent $30,000 to advertise their newly formed correspondence school. By 1903, the Page-Davis Correspondence School of Advertising had graduated thousands of students.[7]

George W. Wagensellar, a prominent Philadelphia copywriter, opened a correspondence school in the first few years of the century. Like Page and Davis, he was a clever writer who used the principles of his own craft to enlist students. He published a short, simple text entitled The Theory and Practice of Advertising, which served as an advertisement for his course--each book included a coupon worth one dollar off the cost of the course.[8]

University of Michigan graduate A.F. Sheldon offered yet another correspondence course in the first years of the century. Like the others, he developed a special scheme for selling the course to prospective students: they paid separately for each consecutive volume of the course, a system which minimized students' initial cash outlay for tuition.[9]

By far the most extensive correspondence course in advertising was published by the International Correspondence Schools under its International Library of Technology series. S. Roland Hall wrote all six volumes during the early years of the 1900s. In many respects, Hall's work prefigured the more advanced advertising texts written after the First World War.

He included information on channels of distribution, communication objectives, campaign management, marketing, product research, and creative strategies. Unlike other correspondence course materials, the series was printed on exceptionally high-quality paper, permanently bound, well-illustrated and neatly organized.

Practitioners almost unanimously agreed that such courses were inadequate as training for employment and that manufacturers and agencies would not likely hire a graduate. Printers' Ink in 1902 found that "New York agencies and advertising men regard the graduate of the advertising schools in sorrow and protest. It is hard, they think, that he should apply his good money for being taught things that leave him far from the real road to an advertising career."[10] Charles Austin Bates suggested that the aspiring copywriter should instead "invest his thirty dollars in advertising journals, books, pencils and paper, work hard, study humbly and fit himself into one of the many small niches that are waiting for him everywhere."[11] Another writer told Printers' Ink that he would not hire a graduate for three reasons: any man who was "gullible enough to think that the diploma would give him an instant job and instant remuneration lacks good judgment"; graduates held a "helplessly distorted view of advertising"; graduates were "too theoretical in knowledge," lacking experience with "hard truth."[12]

In spite of such harsh criticisms of correspondence schools and the training received by graduates, the trade press' major concern seemed to be the fact that good-intentioned and sometimes potentially productive students were deceived by the employment promises made in advertising for courses. Advertising journals published many sympathetic articles about victims of such

fraudulent promotion and printed letters from unemployed graduates who complained that agencies and manufacturers discriminated against former students of correspondence schools.[13]

Established practitioners resented the schools' claims that copywriting could be taught in a few months and that all men and women were equally capable of becoming successful writers. Printers' Ink editorialized that correspondence schools could teach only a student with a "natural capacity for advertisement writing."[14] An advertising manager wrote that a practitioner "has to know not alone by intuition, but by cold-blooded practical experience what's good and what's bad for his purposes; what the people who represent his audience want, and what they don't want."[15]

Trade press responses to the development of correspondence schools increasingly showed that practitioners wished to make the craft a profession. Copywriters and other members of the business correctly saw that those schools, and especially their advertising, promoted the public image of advertising as hucksterism and challenged practitioners' belief that successful advertising required specialized technical skills. Beginning about 1902, many practitioners openly sought to establish formalized methods of instruction--methods which might be effectively controlled by the business itself. They realized that formalized and standardized education was one prerequisite for professional status and discussed in the trade press and at club meetings how best to organize classroom education in the principles of advertising.

One reader told Printers' Ink that although correspondence schools were indeed a threat to the status of the craft, law and medicine depended upon "receiving their instruction from a practitioner" and so should advertising. He further argued that the Chicago College of Advertising, a business school, "has a right to be classed with the Chicago College of Physicians and Surgeons, and the Chicago College of Law or the Armour Institute."[16]

The most forceful and lucid argument for professional advertising education appeared in Profitable Advertising in 1905. Written by Calkins, the two-part series began with the declaration: "I believe that advertising can be taught...I fully believe that the time will come when there will be a fully-equipped advertising school and this school will teach advertising as other professional schools now teach other professions."[17] In his "advertising college," Calkins would have the introductory course include an analysis of distribution, media and sales management. He proposed the college then offer a dozen courses "devoted to a special study of some one of the departments of advertising, including business conduct, managership, commerce, mail order advertising and retail advertising. Students would then take "technical courses" in topics such as printing and typography. Finally, in the third year the student would complete his study of advertising with an investigation of the "higher branches of advertising," including psychology, statistics and copywriting styles. "Such a school will make its appeal to the public in the same dignified, conservative way that a good law or medicine school makes its appeal," wrote Calkins.[18]

In spite of eloquent arguments by advocates such as Calkins, some older practitioners remained against the business college concept. Apparently they viewed any formalized advertising instruction as a threat to their own status within the business. If advertising were taught successfully, they reasoned, their own experiential knowledge would no longer serve as a source of prestige and honor. The idea of an advertising college split the advertising community into two camps; the younger practitioners who sought professional status and the older practitioners who saw formal education as an attack on the ideal of individual craftsmanship. Some supporters of professionalism hoped to develop a method of advertising instruction that would not disenfranchise older practitioners, such as the influential Rowell, who used his journal to attack the ideals of formal and especially scientific education. In an address before the Des Moines advertising club, one practitioner suggested that advertising education in business colleges would not alienate older practitioners because they could earn a degree while continuing work. He hoped to balance the interests of professionalism with the fears of older practitioners by establishing a program that allowed for the professional advancement of well-known and well-respected practitioners.[19] Nevertheless, formal instruction continued to evoke strong dissension from the older ranks of the advertising business.

Business college administrators for different reasons agreed with the older practitioners that advertising instruction should not be initiated at their schools. They worried that established businessmen, who often were part-time students at business colleges,

might withdraw from schools that offered advertising courses.[20] Advertising continued during the early years of the century to suffer a Barnumesque public image which might tarnish the reputation or reduce the enrollment of business schools. The business college concept became a two-edged sword for advocates of professionalism; as a tool for severing ties with the old craft and creating new identities, it also elicited the fearful responses of some older practitioners and revealed the concerns of business college administrators.

Young supporters of business college courses refused to accept the validity of their partners' criticisms. For them, formalized advertising instruction represented nothing less than the ideal of professionalism and the future status of the occupation in American society. They told their business colleagues that the occupation must follow the lead of true professions by instituting educational requirements and by making those requirements mandatory for entry into the profession. An editorial in Profitable Advertising stated that "there are incompetents in all professions, but there are in most of them standards for estimating the attainments of their professors, at least. In advertising there are no standards. If a person wishes to pose as an advertising expert there is no one to say him nay, and no one authorized to express a doubt about his ability."[21] Advocates of professionalism told older practitioners that formal instruction would help enforce professional standards of practice, but it was such enforcement which older members of the occupation feared.

As the debate over advertising education continued in the trade press during the early years of the century, the drive for professionalism became a preoccupation of practitioners throughout the country. The fears of older practitioners gradually disappeared from journals as large numbers of young businessmen entered advertising and openly expressed their desire to make the craft a profession equivalent in status with law and medicine. Reactionary journals such as Printers' Ink still frequently criticized defenders of advertising instruction, but for the most part members of the business strongly favored formal education in the principles of creating advertisements and placing them in appropriate media.

Individual practitioners' desires for professional status took on collective dimensions in 1906 when representatives of local clubs from almost every state in the union formed the AACA. At first variously called the American Federation of Advertising Clubs and the National Federation of Advertising Clubs, the AACA became the umbrella organization for virtually every type of local club and advertising-related occupation in the United States. One practitioner wrote that the organization "is practically along the lines of our local advertising clubs, excepting that it is more wide-open in advancing the advertising profession."[22] Boasting a membership 2,000 the first year, the AACA drafted a list of nineteen "purposes" to "advance the advertising profession," including educating merchants and other small advertisers in the development of professional skills, correcting advertising abuses, exposing fraudulent advertising and maintaining a bureau for the registration of advertising men.[23] In short, the AACA addressed the typical characteristics of professionalism:

ethical codes, certification and licensing and educational requirements. The AACA became the first national vehicle for transforming the craft into a profession. Members indicated that professional instruction would contribute to the social status of the craft in two distinct ways. First, formalized advertising education would aid in establishing a corpus of "scientific" advertising principles that would eliminate practitioners' dependence upon intuition and lead to a distinct, specialized occupational role in the nascent urban nation. As one proponent put it, "Throughout the history of the world, mystery has been used to take the place of substance," but "advertising could be proven today to be more nearly exact, more nearly a science than medicine."[24] Another AACA member suggested the AACA should establish a "school of distribution" to grant a "Doctor of Distribution" degree.[25]

Second, the AACA argued that formal instruction might be used in conjunction with certification or licensing to control or regulate entry into the profession. It established a Committee on Standard of Qualifications of an Advertising Man which concluded that all practitioners should be required to "study and understand psychology as it controls advertising...There are many able advertisers who will combat this position," wrote committee chairman George French, "but if a man has an open mind and is willing to go to the bottom of the question, it will always appear that there has never been an advertising success that was not due to the operation of the laws of psychology."[26] One practitioner asked his colleagues "why shouldn't the advertising man be required to show a license, just as a doctor must?" He recommended that, for purposes of improving ethical standards and creating a knowledge base, "local examining committees" be empowered

to grant certificates.[27]

A crucial problem remained in spite of all such proposals: the AACA had no means for requiring licenses or for establishing principles for scientific advertising. Members realized that they could themselves attempt to gain knowledge or they could look to external organizations or institutions for help. Disagreeing over which way to proceed, the AACA chose both internal and external routes; advertising education became a strange mixture of club teaching and university instruction, as well as a combination of social science and public relations.

AACA membership skyrocketed after 1910, and the organization zealously pursued professionalism. Both trade journals and AACA proceedings show that the benefits of professionalism were no longer issues among practitioners; rather, the important question was how best to achieve the degree of professional status that the advertising business earnestly desired. Members perceived education as an increasingly important dimension of professionalism but disagreed on the institutional forms instruction should take.

Some members believed that any form of advertising education should ultimately ensure that the profession itself retained control of the nature, content and method of instruction. Fearing outside interference, they suggested that only bona fide practitioners, not academicians or theorists, should be allowed to teach courses in the fundamentals of advertising. In addition, they said that the content of courses must support the AACA's general tenets of social responsibility, which actually meant courses should reflect ideological advancement of the profession. The Committee on Lectures wrote a "Standard Course" for use by local clubs wishing to offer

advertising instruction at the community level. Lesson plans were less practical than theoretical, however, because of their strong ideological flavor. Novice practitioners learned that advertising should be practiced fairly and honestly because it played an essential role in stimulating the American economy and in promoting a high standard of living. The Standard Course effectively united public relations and vocational instruction.[28]

Local chapters of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) also sponsored advertising courses. AACA members used YMCA facilities in many cities to conduct weekly and biweekly seminars. Evidence in trade journals indicates that YMCA courses were particularly productive for recruiting new practitioners. Taught by successful businessmen from the local community, they gave some institutional form and social legitimation to the subject matter and probably to the profession, as well as boosted the self-image of the instructors who taught them. Nevertheless, the YMCA concept sparked criticism from the strongest supporters of professionalism. As one writer put it, YMCA and correspondence school instruction "begin with their students in the midst of a mass of arbitrary propositions, or unexplained methods, and attempt to build an edifice supported on nothing....It is a pity that it is not at present possible to learn the profession of advertising in any constituted school or institution--only to learn something about advertising."[29] YMCA courses failed in the eyes of such critics to enhance adequately the profession's prestige or to establish a base of scientific knowledge.

John E. Kennedy, a Chicago copywriter, articulated the most elaborate plan for profession-controlled advertising research. He forcefully argued in the trade press and at club meetings that the principle problem in professionalizing advertising instruction was the lack of a unified set of tested theorems or axioms. Advertising was not a science, and thus not amenable to formal instruction, because the business lacked a list of teachable principles of effective persusasion that would hold true irrespective of time or place. Kennedy further said that the only way to solve that dilemma was to bring agency, advertiser and scientist together in a bond of professional harmony. "The Kennedy Plan" reasserted the ideal of professionalism in a novel way by suggesting that academicians should be brought into the fold of the advertising business.

Kennedy called for establishing an Institute for Advertising Research which would "officially investigate and record actual experiences of advertisers, in a wide range of test cases, as a basis for conclusions in study and practice, of advertising principles, as in law, medicine" and other professions. Kennedy insisted that the Institute should be professional in character and national in scope. All American advertisers and agencies were to unite for the cause of professionalism; each business would provide the central Institute office with information on sales results of particular advertising campaigns and specific advertisements. According to Kennedy, Institute personnel would compare the results obtained by the use of various media, advertisement sizes, copy appeals, layouts and colors. The empirical information supplied by advertisers and agencies would inevitably lead to the discovery of an advertising science. Kennedy told his business colleagues that the"profession

of medicine was once where we are today, composed of a lot of individuals, each acting on his own initiative and guided by his own limited light."[30] He believed the success of the Institute for Advertising Research was dependent upon finding a qualified man to direct all research projects. Kennedy proposed a $50,000 initial budget to cover the salary of a prestigious director, preferably a "college president" who was "unfettered" by advertising practitioners and "free to carry out neutral work." Funds were to come from the subscriptions to the Institute's quarterly journal of research.[31]

Ironically, the Kennedy Plan was bitterly attacked by advertisers and agencies who refused to release data on the effectiveness of their advertising. Kennedy failed in the end to distinguish between professional ideals and the pragmatic concerns of the advertising business. Practitioners wished society to confer them professional honor, but not if it meant the loss of a competitive edge in the marketplace.[32] Kennedy's idea was appropriate but misplaced; he should have taken up his crusade with the academy first, because during the same period major universities were developing scientific advertising and offering the first formal courses in the psychology of advertising. Both Kennedy and the AACA sought business-sponsored research and instruction, but American universities had their own pedagogical ideas.

Formalized advertising research emerged in the social sciences as experimental psychologists looked for testable ideas for laboratory studies. University psychologists designed advertising studies that might elucidate the laws of human nature that would presumably remain

true irrespective of time and place. In spite of the stark differences in this period between the university and business communities, a few members of the two groups worked together in the early years of the twentieth century to make advertising a science, an effort that for a few years challenged the professional status of the psychologists involved.

The collaboration of aspiring advertising practitioners and experimental psychologists began in 1901, when Thomas Balmer, magazine representative and active member of the Chicago business community, visited two of the United States' leading psychologists. He tried unsuccessfully to convince Hugo Munsterberg of Harvard and Edward L. Thorndike of Columbia to initiate experiments in advertising effectiveness. Both professors were unwilling to tarnish their careers by taking up "applied" business research problems.[33] Scientific advertising represented an uplifting of social status for the businessman but a denigration of honor for the psychologist. Balmer next visited Walter Dill Scott, former seminarian and newly appointed Assistant Professor of Psychology at Northwestern University, who told Balmer that he would gladly address the Agate Club of Chicago; social science and business had taken an important step toward mutual accommodation.[34]

Scott was not in 1901 a typical university psychologist. He easily made friends with Balmer because of their mutual dislike of purely theoretical knowledge and mutual admiration for applied science. The psychologist's views of science generally and the university specifically had earlier almost cost him his doctorate at Leipzig and evidently had led to his dismissal from the faculty at Columbia in 1900.[35] Scott, who later became president of North-

western, later stated that in 1901 "applied psychology" had absolutely no place with the learned men of the world." He viewed the Agate Club address as an opportunity to change such attitudes by democratizing the university.[36]

Professor Scott's speech, "The Psychology of Involuntary Attention as Applied to Advertising," elicited strong, positive reactions from the Chicago businessmen, who invited him back each month for the next year. Scott told the enthusiastic practitioners exactly what they wanted to hear: the use of experimental psychology techniques could eliminate all uncertainty from copywriting and make advertising an exact science; the study of "attention" and other advertising effects was no less than the study of human nature; psychologists could indeed derive from experiments absolute responses of potential buyers to media advertisements; advertising would be transformed from a crude business into a scientific profession. "Although human choice is reputed to be indeterminable and the unknown factor in the world," spoke Scott, "the results of human choice can be foreknown by the statistician."[37]

The impact of Scott's work in scientific advertising on the development of advertising education was twofold. First, in the years immediately following his 1902 lectures to the Agate Club, Scott's ideas fostered the belief among practitioners that advertising could indeed be based on a set of finite, positive laws of human behavior, a knowledge base equivalent to those in medicine and law.

Virtually every major trade journal reported Scott's optimism to the wider national advertising community. One journal, Mahin's Magazine, was started by Chicago agency owner John Lee Mahin to print transcripts of Scott's lectures each month.[38] It became an important journal in the movement for professionalism in advertising. Second, Scott's work on scientific advertising showed practitioners that the university would focus on applied as well as theoretical problems and that the business community would support academicians who were sympathetic to the needs of the business. Scott found outside the university community the kind of pedagogical and ideological ideas that he wished existed within the ivory walls. He became a laymen's scientist who created knowledge not for the academy but for external consumption by special interests, including business. When publishing his lectures in book form in 1903, Scott purposely left the word "psychology" out of the title in order not to offend fellow scientists; titled The Theory of Advertising, it was the first textbook on advertising for use in psychology classes.[39] Meanwhile, he persuasively defended in popular magazines such as Atlantic Monthly his work in the area of scientific advertising, calling advertising the "nervous system of the business world."[40] The encouragement Scott received from the advertising business was probably an important influence on his decision to design his laboratory courses around the needs of advertisers and copywriters. In 1904 Scott offered the nation's first course in the psychology of advertising, titled "Advanced Experimental Psychology." Scott was a Progressive; he evaluated scientific advertising on grounds of efficiency and control.

The AACA between 1905 and 1912 looked for ways to transform Scott's dream of scientific advertising into a reality, but the reluctance of psychologists other than Scott to pursue applied knowledge made the search very difficult. As correspondence schools, business colleges and YMCAs failed to upgrade sufficiently the status of advertising, however, the AACA became increasingly convinced that universities were the only adequate context for professional instruction. A writer in Printers' Ink summarized the business' dilemma:

> When teaching law in colleges was first talked of, old lawyers shook their heads. College presidents couldn't see it, and so special schools and unreliable business colleges took it up. Then the old lawyers saw that their profession would soon be cheapened and they begged colleges to introduce such courses. This is exactly what has happened to the advertising profession today. Outside of the correspondence courses, there are probably 150 business colleges and Y.M.C.A.'s throughout the country that will graduate advertising men in from ten to thirty lessons. This is not right.[42]

The stalemate between aspiring practitioners and reluctant psychologists slowly disappeared not because of extensive actions by the advertising business but largely because of the changing character of the university. The AACA systematically and deliberately took advantage of the increasingly applied and vocational nature of the American university. Its Committee on Colleges and Universities found other psychologists who were sympathetic to the needs of the advertising business and encouraged them to work with local practitioners on developing advertising courses. At Columbia, Edward L. Thorndike, Harry L. Hollingworth and Edward Kellogg Strong, Jr. collaborated about 1910 with the Advertising Men's League of

New York to refine scientific advertisng principles.[43] And the Committee on Publications enlisted Harvard psychologist Paul T. Cherington to write the first textbook specifically for advertising courses, Advertising as a Business Force, published in 1914. Cherington eventually became a member of the new Graduate School of Business Management. His textbook was shallow in psychology but deep in business techniques. The publisher sold more than 8,000 copies by mid-1915. Cherington actively promoted the introduction of advertising at other major universities and encouraged practitioners to write educational materials for use in university classes.[44]

Psychology programs offered the first but not the only road to university instruction in advertising. In the decade following Scott's initial work in the psychology of advertising, a few major university departments and colleges established advertising courses and in a few cases offered advertising degrees. New instruction followed two major paths: journalism courses primarily at land-grant schools; business courses primarily at private institutions. Each path had its own particular pedagogical emphases and ideological implications for the university; each progressively gave direct control of instruction to academicians rather than to the advertising business itself.

Business schools at major universities began advertising instruction with the enthusiastic support and participation of outspoken members of the AACA, especially manufacturers of nationally distributed consumer products. For example, New York University's School of Commerce, Accounts and Finance offered thirty hours of

advertising courses in the 1905-1906 academic year. Lecturers included William H. Hotchkin, advertising manager for Wannamaker; Frank Presbrey, a New York agency owner; George H. Daniels of the New York Central Lines; and Collins Armstrong, a well-known financial advertiser.[45] AACA members told university administrators that such advertising education was a logical extension of banking, accounting and other branches of business.[46] Advertising instruction and research would benefit society by helping businesses to "reduce distributing costs and make things lower in price to the public." said William Ingersoll, advertising manager and president of a major watch company. He called on college "efficiency men" to help advertising practitioners contribute to the advancement of American society--an "advancement" that was intimately related to the advancement of advertising as a profession.[47] New York University evidently was first to offer business instruction in advertising, but by 1912 Harvard, Dartmouth, and Cornell had followed suit.[48] Many of the early advertising psychologists left their departments to take up residence in business programs: Cherington at Harvard; Daniel Starch at Wisconsin and later Harvard; and Scott himself, who moved from psychology to business to administration, becoming president of Northwestern in 1920. Scott's academic career spanned the formative years of advertising education and was a testament to the changing nature of the American university. A strong advocate of professionalism, as president he played a key role in establishing the Medill School of Journalism.[49]

Unlike business schools, journalism schools saw advertising instruction as an important aspect of newspaper publishing. Land grant institutions initiated advertising instruction as a kind of

extension service for the owners and operators of daily and weekly newspapers. The University of Missouri offered the first journalism course in advertising in 1908, titled "Advertising and Publishing." It also offered the first advertising degree in 1910.[50] Missouri's John B. Powell claims to have been the nation's first full-time instructor of advertising. He also became in 1913 a self-appointed spokesman for advertising education, writing a series of articles on the subject for Printers' Ink. "The average university offers sufficient courses in Economics, English, Psychology, Sociology, History, Political Science, and Public Law to qualify an advertising man on the theoretical side," wrote Powell, but "the problem is to combine these courses with practical courses in advertising and selling in a professional school."[51] He estimated that in 1914 more than one thousand students enrolled in advertising courses in American universities.[52]

On the surface, the AACA's drive for professionalism in education was successful. In 1910, New York University, Missouri, Northwestern, Kansas, Indiana and Iowa offered advertising instruction; by 1912 the list included California, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Illinois, Marquette, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio State, Pennsylvania, and Pittsburgh. And in two more years Boston, Colorado, Cincinnati, Texas, Washington and Oklahoma followed suit.[53] However, as the actual number of universities with advertising courses increased in the years before World War I, a growing number of practitioners believed university instruction was not a solution for the occupation's problem of professional status. Bruce Bliven, an instructor of advertising at the University of Southern California, surveyed advertising teachers in 1917. He found that numerous problems

continued to plague advertising education: instruction was still unstandardized; "unqualified" persons were not prohibited from entering an advertising program; educators were unable to provide instruction that duplicated the conditions of actual business; finally, advertising academicians still disagreed on which scholarly departments advertising education belonged in--business or journalism.[54] Bliven's study revealed one central fact: although the advertising business had successfully convinced universities of the appropriateness of university-level advertising instruction, the business itself had gained only moderate control over the nature and extent of that education. The advertising business, by reaching out to the university for help in creating a profession, had mistakenly undermined its own deisre for autonomy.

The trade press indicates that during World War I the advertising business abandoned much of its quest for professional education. By that time the businessman in America had attained enough social status that advertising practitioners felt no compelling need to form an autonomous profession. Evidence suggests that the advertising business viewed professionalism as little more than a self-serving desire to enhance the status of the craft in America. By bringing together university scientist and advertising businessman, practitioners in the Associated Clubs hoped to create an image of professionalism in society and thereby legitimize advertising as an economic and social practice.

This study of the early advertising business concludes that professionalism can be a self-serving ideal. Once the advertising business realized that professionalism was not necessary for the economic survival or social advancement of the occupation, it for the most part aborted its quest for professionalism. Most importantly, since World

War I the advertising business has most actively sought professionalism at times when the legal and social status of the craft are most in jeopardy, such as the simultaneous development of the National Advertising Review Board and Federal Trade Commission investigations in the early 1970s. The advertising business in the Progressive Era became a quasi-profession that yet today loosely calls on professional autonomy to justify its actions and to defend itself against its enemies--a critical society and a regulatory government. Finally, it is worth noting that advertising education at universities has progressed little beyond the form it took in the early years of the century; it remains a hybrid of applied social science, common-sense craftmanship and professional aspiration.

Notes

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13 See, for example, "Story of an Ad School Graduate," PI 45 (4 November 1903): 6-8;"What Became of One Ad School Graduate," PI 45 (18 November 1903):33; "Experiences and Conclusions of a Female Ad-School Graduate," PI 49 (30 November 1904): 8-11; "His Handicap," PI 41 (1 October 1902):38.

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